



## State Water Resources Control Board

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### Third “My Water Quality” Internet Portal Evaluates Quantity and Quality of California’s Wetlands

**Sacramento**— The California Water Quality Monitoring Council (Monitoring Council) is unveiling the third My Water Quality internet portal to connect decision makers and the public with water quality information. The theme of this new portal is “*Are Our Wetland Ecosystems Healthy?*” View the new portal at [www.waterboards.ca.gov/mywaterquality/](http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/mywaterquality/) under “*Are Our Aquatic Ecosystems Healthy?*”

The new *California Wetlands* portal includes interactive maps and monitoring data that focus on the location, extent and health of the state’s wetlands. The goal is to make this information as timely and user-friendly as possible.

Wetlands perform numerous functions and provide important services to society. They help control global warming by trapping carbon dioxide, improve flood control by storing flood waters, maintain water supplies by replenishing aquifers, protect water quality by filtering runoff, and provide essential habitat for fish and wildlife including threatened and endangered species as well as commercially important species. Wetlands are also attractive. They are an important component of the California landscape.

But many of California’s wetlands have been lost. Some regional studies have reported loss rates up to 90 percent. Remaining wetlands are threatened by human activities, including conversion to urban and agricultural uses, introduction of non-native species, pollution, and overharvesting.

The new *California Wetlands* portal brings this information together in a single location and in an easy to understand manner for the public, environmental organizations, and water quality professionals.

In 2006, the California legislature mandated coordination of water quality monitoring and assessment activities among organizations inside and outside California government, and that this information be made available to decision makers and the public via the internet. The Monitoring Council was formed in 2007 by a cooperative agreement between the California Environmental Protection Agency and the Natural Resources Agency for this purpose. In 2009, the Monitoring Council released its first two internet portals, *Is it Safe to Swim in Our Waters?* and *Is it Safe to Eat Fish and Shellfish from Our Waters?*

The Monitoring Council brings together water quality information from a variety of organizations with special expertise in wetland monitoring and assessment, coordinated through the California Wetland Monitoring Workgroup. Twenty-three state, federal, regional and local agencies and non-governmental organizations have pitched in to answer your water quality questions.

## My Water Quality Internet Portal Fact Sheet

Questions addressed by the new **California Wetlands** portal?

- **What are wetlands?**

Learn about wetland habitat types and the functions and services they provide.

- **Where are California's wetlands? Is there a wetland near me?**

View interactive regional maps and locate yourself on a map

- **How much wetland habitat does California have?**

View charts estimating overall and regional wetland habitat acreages

- **How much wetland habitat has California lost?**

Review a summary of losses due to reclamation and construction since the 1800s

- **How healthy are California's wetlands?**

View results of wetland health assessments based on the California Rapid Assessment Method (CRAM)

- **What is being done to improve California's wetlands?**

Review descriptions and case studies of acquisition, restoration, and enhancement work

- **What is the status of wetland mapping in California?**

See whether wetlands near you have been mapped

### **More My Water Quality Web Portals Are Coming**

Within the next few months, additional web portals will be released to address the following water quality questions:

- Is Our Water Safe to Drink?
- Are Our Aquatic Ecosystems Healthy?

These next portals will focus on groundwater and streams, respectively.

### **Help Us Make It Better**

We are continually working to improve the quality of the information presented in these web portals and the underlying water quality monitoring and assessment programs. Please help us to make them better

- Contact the SB 1070 Coordinator with your comments and suggestions
- Attend a meeting of the California Water Quality Monitoring Council
- Get involved in one or more of the expert stakeholder work groups

More information about the Senate Bill 1070, the Monitoring Council, and the expert stakeholder work groups is on the web at

[www.waterboards.ca.gov/water\\_issues/programs/monitoring\\_council/](http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/monitoring_council/).